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ABSTRACT

Pacific principals' perceived priority needs for professional development are examined. Mailed surveys of 439 principals in 10 jurisdictions yielded 243 responses, or a 55 percent response rate. Respondents rated themselves on task effectiveness and professional development needs. Results indicate a need for information concerning community resources, facility and equipment needs assessment, absenteeism reduction programs, and conduct codes. The two greatest challenges include reducing teacher and student absenteeism and increasing parent and community involvement. Recommendations are made for utilization of staff development information, development of performance criteria, and implementation of mentoring programs. A discrepant finding was that principals requested the most information about tasks that they perceived themselves as performing most effectively. Fourteen statistical tables and a copy of the questionnaire are included. (LMI)

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Research in Pacific Education

A Report to Pacific Educational Researchers

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Developing Excellence in School Leadership: An Assessment of Principalship in the Pacific Region

by
CAPE Research and Development Cadre

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The direct responsibility for improving instruction and learning rests in the hands of school principals. Do principals of schools with high achievement exhibit specific leadership behaviors? Research suggests that they do.

I. INTRODUCTION

At its August 1999 meeting, the Center for the Advancement of Pacific Education (CAPE) Policy Board approved the pursuit of a regionwide research project on principalship to be conducted by the CAPE Research and Development Cadre. This Cadre is comprised of Pacific educators from each department of education and from postsecondary institutions in the Pacific Region. The Cadre guides and conducts research projects designed to meet regional and departmental needs. The CAPE Board expressed consensus that there is a critical need to develop excellence among Pacific school principals and, in turn, that training and technical assistance programs for current and aspiring principals represent the best approach to achieving excellence. Therefore, the Board designated the "Principal: Excellence in Leadership" project as its first priority research topic. The purpose of the project was to conduct a principal self-assessment to be used as a basis for judging what the Pacific principals perceive to be their priority needs for professional development. This information will assist the CAPE Policy Board and staff to better address professional development needs of principals in the Pacific Region.

II. PROCEDURES

The Principal Self Assessment Survey instrument was developed by the CAPE R&D Cadre during Seminar XII, February 1990, in Honolulu. The Cadre reviewed research literature pertaining to effective schools and instructional leadership as guidelines for the development of the survey instrument. The survey asked principals to rate themselves on how well they currently perform 37 principalship tasks and to answer two open-ended questions. The survey was conducted by the entities of the CAPE Pacific Region, which encompasses the Republic of Palau, Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Federated States of Micronesia (Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae), Republic of the Marshall Islands, State of Hawaii, and American Samoa.

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A task force of five members from the Cadre analyzed the survey results that were returned from Palau, CNMI, Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae, and the Marshall Islands. Survey results from Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, and Yap were not received in time for this initial analysis; however, a regionwide analysis was done later during Seminar XII in August 1990.

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The survey has 37 items with two open-ended questions. The instrument used in the assessment is in a Likert Scale format with a 5 point scale. The ratings ("how well you feel you currently perform on each task listed") are as follows:

5 = Very Well

4 = Well

3 = Fairly Well

2 = Not Fairly Well

1 = Not Well

N/A = Not Applicable

_____ Check if you feel a need to know more about this topic

The 37 items represent competency tasks for principals in their professional and leadership roles. The 37 items are subsumed under six general categories in which the principals were asked to rate themselves. The following are the general categories:

- A. Management and Supervision
- B. Curriculum and Instruction
- C. School Climate and Facilities
- D. Student Services
- E. Community and Parental Involvement
- F. Staff/Professional Development

In each general category there are several items relating to principalship tasks. Some items may fall within two or three general categories. For example, "I monitor school staff to ensure that curriculum goals and objectives are being met" falls under both categories A and B, which are Management and Supervision, and Curriculum and Instruction.

The following are the principalship categories and the items that fall within each:

A. Management and Supervision

Item #:

- 2. Monitor curriculum implementation
- 11. Ensure uniform grading system
- 12. Ensure consistent grading system

13. Utilize systematic staff evaluation
14. Encourage professional growth
16. Facilitate program development
17. Assess school operations
18. Keep abreast of new teaching techniques
21. Use programs to reduce absenteeism
24. Maintain master schedule
25. Maintain records to facilitate management

B. Curriculum and Instruction

Item #:

1. Communicate school mission
2. Monitor curriculum implementation
3. Observe teachers
4. Provide observation feedback
5. Ensure required instructional hours
6. Initiate instructional activities
7. Use test data, etc., to improve instruction
8. Provide student counseling
9. Publicize student progress
10. Share progress for alternative actions
17. Assess school operations

C. Community and Parental Involvement

Item #:

9. Publicize student progress
28. Deal with conflict in school
32. Provide an orientation for parents

33. Communicate with the community

34. Utilize resources

35. Collaborate with the community

D. Student Services

Item #:

9. Publicize student progress

20. Establish reward procedures

21. Use programs to reduce absenteeism

22. Provide due process for students

23. Provide a written code of conduct

28. Deal with conflict in the school

31. Provide an orientation for new students

E. Staff/Professional Development

Item #:

14. Encourage professional growth

15. Utilize staff special skills

16. Facilitate program development

18. Keep abreast of new teaching techniques

19. Model effective practices.

F. School Climate and Facilities

Item #:

14. Encourage professional growth

15. Utilize staff special skills

16. Facilitate program development

17. Assess school operations

18. Keep abreast of new teaching techniques

26. Use fiscal operation system

27. Coordinate staff responsibilities

28. Deal with conflict in the school
29. Provide due process in staff grievances
30. Provide an orientation of new staff
36. Assess facilities and equipment
37. Get involved in school improvement plans

The two open-ended questions asked principals what they considered to be their greatest challenges as principals in regards to management and instructional leadership.

A copy of the survey instrument is included in Appendix A of this report.

IV. SURVEY RETURNS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Survey Returns

The following display presents the number of surveys sent out and the return rate from each entity:

	<u>Entities</u>	<u>Surveys Sent</u>	<u>Returned</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1.	Palau	22	22	100%
2.	CNMI	30	24	80%
3.	Pohnpei	35	27	77%
4.	Marshalls	30	20	67%
5.	Hawaii	59	39	66%
6.	Chuuk	53	33	62%
7.	Kosrae	11	6	55%
8.	Yap	35	19	54%
9.	Guam	101	41	40%
10.	Am. Samoa	63	12	19%
	TOTAL	439	243	55%

The return rates are generally quite high and there is no identifiable bias in the non-respondents. It should be noted that the percent rate of return for the entire region is reduced by the very low return from American Samoa.

Data Analysis

During R&D Seminar XIII, the task force was able to analyze returned surveys from all jurisdictions to set priorities for professional development as perceived by Pacific principals based on mean scores for the region and the jurisdictions. The following presents the mean scores and standard deviations for the categories of principalship tasks for each individual entity.

Hawaii	n=39	mean	SD
1. Community and Parental Involvement		3.94	0.27
2. Curriculum and Instruction		3.98	0.23
3. Management and Supervision		4.03	0.37
4. Staff/Professional Development		4.17	0.27
5. Student Services		4.18	0.31
6. School Climate and Facilities		4.20	0.27

American Samoa	n=12	mean	SD
1. Staff/Professional Development		3.96	0.13
2. Community and Parental Involvement		4.08	0.22
3. Student Services		4.14	0.20
4. Management and Supervision		4.18	0.28
5. School Climate and Facilities		4.20	0.29
6. Curriculum and Instruction		4.23	0.22

Republic of the Marshall Islands	n=20	mean	SD
1. Community and Parental Involvement		3.61	0.42
2. Student Services		3.76	0.21
3. Staff/Professional Development		3.83	0.16
4. Curriculum and Instruction		3.85	0.30
5. School Climate and Facilities		3.86	0.22
6. Management and Supervision		3.89	0.22

Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)

Chuuk (FSM)	n=33	mean	SD
1. Staff/Professional Development		3.56	0.33
2. School Climate and Facilities		3.67	0.42
3. Management and Supervision		3.69	0.37
4. Student Services		3.70	0.42
5. Curriculum and Instruction		3.79	0.29
6. Community and Parental Involvement		3.79	0.39

Kosrae (FSM)	n=6	mean	SD
1. Staff/Professional Development		3.64	0.22
2. Student Services		3.75	0.31
3. Community and Parental Involvement		3.76	0.28
4. School Climate and Facilities		3.98	0.38
5. Management and Supervision		4.02	0.32
6. Curriculum and Instruction		4.15	0.36

Pohnpei (FSM)	n=27	mean	SD
1. Community and Parental Involvement		3.75	0.41
2. Student Services		3.76	0.41
3. Staff/Professional Development		3.81	0.23
4. Curriculum and Instruction		3.81	0.31
5. Management and Supervision		3.92	0.23
6. School Climate and Facilities		3.93	0.29

Yap (FSM)	n=19	mean	SD
1. Curriculum and Instruction		3.52	0.41
2. Staff/Professional Development		3.60	0.29
3. Management and Supervision		3.63	0.34
4. Student Services		3.66	0.42
5. School Climate and Facilities		3.70	0.27
6. Community and Parental Involvement		3.76	0.31

Guam	n=41	mean	SD
1. Community and Parental Involvement		3.59	0.29
2. Curriculum and Instruction		3.72	0.16
3. Student Services		3.80	0.37
4. Staff/Professional Development		3.87	0.17
5. School Climate and Facilities		3.93	0.16
6. Management and Supervision		3.94	0.17

Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas n=24 mean SD

1. Management and Supervision	4.20	0.26
2. Community and Parental Involvement	4.21	0.26
3. Student Services	4.21	0.26
4. Staff/Professional Development	4.21	0.25
5. Curriculum and Instruction	4.22	0.27
6. School Climate and Facilities	4.26	0.23

Palau n=22 mean SD

1. Staff/Professional Development	3.63	0.25
2. Student Services	3.65	0.24
3. School Climate and Facilities	3.73	0.23
4. Community and Parental Involvement	3.74	0.21
5. Management and Supervision	3.80	0.28
6. Curriculum and Instruction	3.81	0.19

Regionwide mean

1. Student Services	3.65
2. Staff/Professional Development	3.73
3. Community and Parental Involvement	3.76
4. Curriculum and Instruction	3.88
5. School Climate and Facilities	3.89
6. Management and Supervision	3.91

It is perhaps not surprising that there are both similarities and differences among the principals of the various jurisdictions in their perceived level of performance on the principalship tasks. Some of the major findings are as follows:

- o On the average, principals from CNMI, Hawaii, and American Samoa report the highest level of performance in all principalship categories. The mean ratings from these entities are from 3.9 - 4.2, at the performing "well" level of the survey scales. The CNMI respondents had mean ratings of 4.2 for all six categories, indicating the lowest self-perceived need for professional development among principals across the Pacific region.

- o While all jurisdictions had mean self-assessment ratings on all the principalship categories of 3.5 or higher ("fairly well to well"), the Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Guam, and Federated States of Micronesia (except Kosrae) all had means from 3.5 - 3.9. Yap state had the relatively lowest mean ratings, from 3.5 - 3.7.
- o In terms of individual principalship categories, an analysis of Pacificwide mean ratings and rank-ordering of the means indicates that the lowest ratings, or highest areas of need for additional professional development of principals over the entire region, are in the categories of Staff/Professional Development, Community and Parental Involvement, and Student Services.
- o The distributions of principals' ratings as indicated by the standard deviations do not suggest any categories having outliers of any significance.
- o Differences in the category rank orders of self-assessed performance by the principals suggests that entities do indeed vary. The following display presents the rank-order distributions of the six principalship category means across the ten jurisdictions. A rank order of #1 indicates the lowest mean rating by the principals of a jurisdiction among the six categories.

Jurisdictional Rank Order of Means										
Category	Hawaii	Amer. Samoa	Marshall Islands	Chuuk	Kosrae	Pohnpei	Yap	Guam	CNMI	Palau
Community and Parental Involvement	1	2	1	6	3	1	6	1	2	4
Curriculum and Instruction	2	6	4	5	6	4	1	2	5	6
Management and Supervision	3	4	6	3	5	5	3	6	1	5
Staff/Profess. Development	4	1	3	1	1	3	2	4	4	1
Student Services	5	3	2	4	2	2	4	3	3	2
School Climate and Facilities	6	5	5	2	4	6	5	5	6	3

As was indicated above, the principals' self-assessments across the region as a whole indicated that one of the highest relative areas of need for professional growth in principals was that of community and parental involvement in the schools. However, the above table puts this into perspective; even though this category is high regionally, it is the sixth, or lowest, priority among the six categories as indicated by Chuuk and Yap. Conversely, it might be that professional development assistance in the area of school climate and facilities would be desired by Chuuk and Palau principals but not for others across the region.

Analysis of N/As and Checks

Regionwide, all items were sometimes referred to as not applicable (N/A) except for item #2, monitoring school staff to ensure that curriculum goals and objectives are being met.

Below is the frequency count for N/As (not applicable) in order of most to least frequent in occurrence:

	Items	Frequency
1.	#30,32	14
2.	#31	13
3.	#21	12
4.	#3,4,7	11
5.	#9	10
6.	#20,23,29	9
7.	#10,11,12,34,37	8
8.	#5,13,22	7
9.	#8,26,28,36	6
10.	#14,16,24	5
11.	#6,15,18,27,35	4
12.	#1,17,19,25,33	3
13.	#2	0

While responsibilities certainly will vary across schools and across the region, it is interesting that eleven principals indicated that observing teacher performance (item 3) is not applicable to their roles.

The principals were provided an opportunity to indicate those tasks that they would like to know more about by putting a check mark next to the item. All items were checked by at least six principals. The following are the items checked in the order of most to least frequent in occurrence.

	Items	Frequency
1.	#34,36	17
2.	#21,23	15
3.	#20,22,26,29	14
4.	#13,15,18,24,35	12
5.	#1,2,6,19,33,37	11
6.	#14,17,25,28,30,31,32	10
7.	#3,4,5,9,10	9
8.	#8,16,27	8
9.	#7,11	7
10.	#12	6

The areas of highest frequency above are: using community resources (item 34), assessing facility and equipment needs (item 36), using programs to reduce absenteeism (item 21), providing a code of conduct (item 23), establishing procedures to reward excellence in student achievement (item 20), providing a process for student and staff problems (items 22,29), and monitoring fiscal operations (item 26). This type of information could be useful for providing assistance to individual principals on specific needs.

As was indicated earlier, the principals were asked two open-ended questions to identify what they considered to be their greatest challenges as a principal and the greatest challenges the school faces in providing meaningful learning experiences for the students. The responses to these two questions from the all entities were analyzed. Across the region, principals indicated the following as their major challenges and concerns:

1. Controlling absenteeism of teachers and students
2. Community and parental involvement
3. Time to do all principal duties and responsibilities
4. Limited resources
5. Limited facilities
6. Limited staff
7. Improving teachers' skills and attitudes toward job
8. Improving students' achievement and attitudes toward learning
9. Motivation (students and teachers)
10. Improving relationships between central office and schools
11. Salary (reported only by FSM)

It is interesting that the region mean rating for item #21, use of programs to reduce absenteeism, is 3.66, indicating that principals feel they are doing fairly well to well in this task. Yet at the same time, principals across the region, except for Hawaii, indicated that controlling teacher and student absenteeism is their number one major challenge. The second major challenge that was listed was community and parental involvement, yet the averages for the region on item 33, communicate with the community, (4.07) and item 35, collaborate with the community, (3.53) suggest that the principals feel they are doing well in this area. Note that in the preceding section, principals also expressed the desire for more information about using community resources, item #34. The third major challenge is being an instructional leader, yet again the region average for items in regard to instructional leadership range from 3.62 to 4.47. The message seems to be that while they feel they are doing an adequate job, principals do want more information and assistance in a number of principalship tasks.

V. IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Prior to the survey, a decision was made to set a standard or criterion for the rating scale. Any item with a mean of 3.0 or below was to be considered as an area of need for developing excellence in leadership for principals and aspiring principals. On the average across the region, the survey indicated that principals reported doing well above the 3.0 level on the 37 principalship tasks. However, the responses to the two open-ended questions contradict the arbitrary criterion level set for the 37 survey items. Principals were self rating their performance on the 37 tasks; they were not rating themselves against any set criteria. This may indicate that principals were reluctant to

rate themselves low or were not clear on the items. At any rate, there is a need for follow-up work to confirm technical assistance and staff development possibilities suggested in this study. Performance criteria developed by teachers and administrators on the 37 tasks are also needed. Communities' expectations of their principals should be considered when developing performance criteria.

Ultimately, outstanding principals across the region should be identified and serve as mentors to "rookie" or aspiring principals. A Mentor Principal Model could be implemented at selected pilot sites, enabling principals to share their skills and knowledge. The 37 principalship tasks could be used as objectives, to drive the activities to follow. Technical assistance could be provided as professional development for the mentors.

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CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PACIFIC EDUCATION

DEVELOPING EXCELLENCE IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP SURVEY OF PRIORITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPALS IN THE PACIFIC REGION

CAPE R&D PROJECT #1

PRINCIPAL SELF ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Purpose: Your participation in this survey will assist the Center for the Advancement of Pacific Education (CAPE) Policy Board and staff to better address professional development needs of principals in the Pacific Region.

Instructions: Please rate yourself using the scale provided, on how well you feel you currently perform on each task listed. Your individual responses will be **kept strictly confidential.**

Please circle only one.

- 5 = very well
 4 = well
 3 = fairly well
 2 = not fairly well
 1 = not well
 N/A = not applicable
 ✓ = Check if you feel a need to know more about this topic.

- | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| 1. I communicate the school mission, goals and objectives to my school staff. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | N/A | ___ |
| 2. I monitor school staff to ensure that curriculum goals and objectives are being met. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | N/A | ___ |
| 3. I observe teachers' classroom performance for the purpose of instructional improvement. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | N/A | ___ |
| 4. I provide observation feedback to my teachers. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | N/A | ___ |
| 5. I ensure that the required number of instructional hours are used for instruction. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | N/A | ___ |

6.	I initiate activities to improve instruction and student achievement.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
7.	I use data such as test results to improve instruction and student achievement.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
8.	I provide leadership for student counseling and guidance services.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
9.	I publicize students' progress.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
10.	I share summaries of student performance with all staff who then assist in developing alternative actions.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
11.	I ensure that my school grading practices are uniform across grades and subject areas.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
12.	I ensure that the grading procedures are used consistently.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
13.	I use a systematic and objective procedure for evaluating school staff	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
14.	I encourage staff professional opportunities and growth through such things as workshops, seminars, classes and involvement in professional organizations.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
15.	I use the special skills demonstrated by my staff.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
16.	I facilitate school staff involvement in instructional program development.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
17.	I assess the strengths and weaknesses of my school for program improvement.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___

18.	I keep abreast of new learning and teaching techniques.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
19.	I model effective practices to my staff.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
20.	I have established procedures to reward excellence in student achievement and/or behavior.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
21.	I use programs to reduce absenteeism.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
22.	I provide due process for student disciplinary cases.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
23.	I provide a written code of conduct that specifies acceptable student behavior.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
24.	I maintain a master activity schedule.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
25.	I take responsibility for the records required to facilitate the management of my school.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
26.	I use an administrative system to monitor my school's fiscal operations and progress.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
27.	I coordinate and schedule my school staff duties and responsibilities.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
28.	I deal with conflicts that arise among school staff, students and parents.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
29.	I provide due process in staff grievance procedures.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
30.	I provide orientation for new staff.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___
31.	I provide orientation for new students.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	___

- | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| 32. | I provide orientation for parents. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | N/A | ___ |
| 33. | I communicate with parents and community members to secure support for my school and its programs. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | N/A | ___ |
| 34. | I utilize human and material resources of the community to enrich the educational programs. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | N/A | ___ |
| 35. | I collaborate with appropriate community resources and support services. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | N/A | ___ |
| 36. | I assess facility and equipment needs in terms of my school goals and objectives. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | N/A | ___ |
| 37. | I am involved in the development of school improvement plan for the orderly improvement of my school. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | N/A | ___ |
| 38. | What is the greatest challenge which you face as a school principal? | | | | | | | |
| 39. | What is the greatest challenge your school faces in providing meaningful learning experiences for the students? | | | | | | | |

IMPORTANT

Purpose: Please provide the following information about yourself to assist the CAPE Policy Board and staff to better address your professional development needs. Your individual responses will be kept strictly confidential.

Instructions: Use check on item #1 and fill in on each blank:

1. Principal ____ Vice Principal ____
2. Sex ____ 3. Age ____
4. Years of working experience as a principal ____
5. Highest degree _____
6. School grade level range ____ to ____
7. School enrollment _____
8. Total staff _____